

## THE CONUNDRUM OF INDIA-CHINA RELATIONSHIP DURING MODI -XI JINPING ERA

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### ABSTRACT

*India and China are neighbors and have been seen as competitors since the 1950s. China spectacular economic growth is speckled ahead of India in all elements of wide-ranging national power. Though Trade between the two countries is creating new records, still both continue to interface at multilateral forums, including those associated with security such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum. Border issues are an ongoing woe and it is the generally irritable drift between their relations; while mutual relations are stabilized in other areas. China has made significant inroads into Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bangladesh, and expanded significantly across the Indian Ocean which was regarded by India as its backyard. The border dispute between India and China has been used as an instrument by China for keeping India off balance. The two countries are stationed at a junction, and this might be the final chance to take the path to coexistence, cooperation and competition or else it will give rise to a new phase of aggressive rivalry, where both the countries will be in confrontation as the calculated border of China collides with the strategic backyard of India in the Indian Ocean region.*

*In the present paper, the researcher has adopted a non-empirical research methodology to analyze the puzzling Sino-Indian relations in recent times where on one hand both countries are escalating their trade ties and on another India has banned several Chinese Apps in India. At a certain point of time, the leaders engage in reaching consensus on strategic issues and on the country both start a military faceoff. Even in regional cooperation both the countries have divergent perspectives.*

**KEYWORDS:** India China Trade Relations Military Faceoff Border Disputes

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

India's relation with China has been a topsy-turvy since the Nehruvian era and so it is under the Modi -Jinping regime. At certain points of time their relationship appears to be cordial enough in the economic sphere where bilateral trade between both is growing by leaps and bounds and with respect to political and geographical issues they are confronting each other. The two leaders during two informal summits in Wuhan and China respectively had reached a consensus to strengthen their ties for development purposes.<sup>1</sup>

However, the growing military rivalry between the two and recent clashes in Galwan valley and Doklam region gives a glimpse of the other side of the picture. After the Galwan military faceoff India declared a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics and even banned official media coverage of the opening and closing

<sup>1</sup>The Hindu March 31, 2020 - 70 Years of Diplomatic Relations between China and India [1950-2020]

ceremonies; whereas China regretted the Indian move and termed it 'politicization' of sports<sup>2</sup>. China being the permanent member of UNSC, enjoys a privileged position and is conscious enough about the changing dynamics if India makes its seat in UNSC as a Permanent Member, hence opposes the move<sup>3</sup>. China and India have similar priorities in their respective domestic spheres; both focus on post-colonial state building, and exploring measures for socio-economic justice thus policies of both the nations are based on systematizing these two aims. The first aim of both the nations leads to conflict and the second one opens the road for cooperation<sup>4</sup>. Wider welfare stipulates that both countries craft a fragile co-existence and soothe a fragmenting world order<sup>5</sup>.

Economic and political relations between China and India have their own varied dynamics. Budding drift signifies that both India and China will persist to be extremely aggressive in the global and regional trade and economic area, and will keep on competing for political position and influence in regional spheres.

### 1.1 'Act East Policy' (AEP) Vis-a Vis Belt and Road Initiative

India under PM Narendra Modi's leadership has swiftly moved from 'look east policy' towards Act East policy which aims to fulfill its future developmental goal for its North Eastern region and to accelerate its economic growth to combat Beijing's rising influence in South Asia<sup>6</sup>. This policy integrates array of security-related measures that extends India's security policy cooperation with regional partners and interlinks the geographical sphere of the Indian Ocean with that of the Pacific<sup>7</sup>. But China is acting as determinant as well as a constraint in India's Look East Policy,<sup>8</sup> as it apprehends that the Policy may amount as an reaction to the Chinese mounting power aggravating complementary behavior.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.2 China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

BRI is the world's prime initiative undertaken by China for enhancing global connectivity and funding financial infrastructure development which is proving to be a really comprehensive venture<sup>10</sup>. Around two thousand six hundred BRI-related projects at the global level with a total value of US \$3.7 trillion were initiated till July 2020. On August 27, 2021 the first road-rail transportation connectivity was started<sup>11</sup> as part of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC)<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> T.Kartha,(2022) "India and China share a grey relationship. It all hinges on 'waiting for the right time' , " The Print Feb 7, 2022

<sup>3</sup> Hindustan Times Nov 19, 2020

<sup>4</sup> M.Srivastav & v. Tiberghien, (2022) "The paradox of China-India relations" March 26, 2022 East Asia Forum –weekly digest as retrived from [www.eastasiaforum.org/2022/03/26/the-paradox-of-china-india-relations/](http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2022/03/26/the-paradox-of-china-india-relations/)

<sup>5</sup> Singh, Zorawar Daulet.(2020) Powershift: India-China Relations in a Multipolar World. India: Pan Macmillan.,

<sup>6</sup> V.Diwan,(2021) "India's Act East Policy: Strategic Rationales and Maritime Strategy", as retrived from [thesecuritydistillery.org/all-articles/indias-act-east-policy-strategic-rationales-and-maritime-strategy](http://thesecuritydistillery.org/all-articles/indias-act-east-policy-strategic-rationales-and-maritime-strategy)

<sup>7</sup>European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS), Amsterdam July 2020

<sup>8</sup> B. Ghoshal, (2013) "China's Perception of 'Look East Policy' and Its Implications", IDSA Monograph Series No. 26 , 2013as accessed from [idsa.in/monograph/ChinasPerceptionofLookEastPolicyandItsImplications](http://idsa.in/monograph/ChinasPerceptionofLookEastPolicyandItsImplications)

<sup>9</sup> J.Botsher,(2011) "A neorealist assessment of India's Look East Policy The balancing of china as a motive for India's close cooperation with southeast Asia", Master's Thesis, as accessed from [www.grin.com/document/170395](http://www.grin.com/document/170395)

<sup>10</sup> V. Schulhof, D. v. Vuuren, J. Kirchherr,(2022) "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): What Will it Look Like in the Future?", Technological Forecasting and Social Change, Volume 175, 2022, 121306, ISSN 0040-1625, doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121306

<sup>11</sup> Augustine R.(2021), "India's Act East Policy: Warning to China or Flawed Strategy?", Geo-political Monitor ,October 13, 2021 as accessed from [www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/indias-act-east-policy-warning-to-china-or-flawed-strategy/](http://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/indias-act-east-policy-warning-to-china-or-flawed-strategy/)

<sup>12</sup> A regional sub-pillar of the BRI to the Indian Ocean,

Till January 2021, 140 countries were connected in the BRI- connected ventures.<sup>13</sup> On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021, the foremost rail freight was initiated between China's Greater Bay Area and Southeast Asia. India is threatened with China's association and connectivity with India's instantaneous neighbors through these corridors as it apprehends that the move will change existing power dynamics in the region<sup>14</sup>. Though India supports infrastructural development of the region, but yet it is alarmed regarding the premeditated propositions of Chinese-led BRI projects.<sup>15</sup> India has repeatedly refused to join BRI because of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which go by through Pak occupied Kashmir (PoK).<sup>16</sup> India's perception of BRI is that rather than focusing on fiscal growth and it is more concerned about bigger political and deliberate goals.<sup>17</sup> India regards BRI as a challenge to its foreign policy objectives, approach, and organization as well as its internal structures of administration, including centre-state relations<sup>18</sup>.

## 2.0 TRADE RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA

Despite sour Sino-Indian relations, trade volume between the two nations is witnessing a phenomenal increase<sup>19</sup>. Bilateral trade between both the countries crossed \$100 billion in the first 11 months of 2021 to clock a total of \$114.26 billion; merely a couple of decades back the trade between the same countries was merely \$1.83 billion.

India has become the largest supplier of rice to China recently.<sup>20</sup> In 2021 Imports grew over a record 46 per cent while exports were up 35 per cent<sup>21</sup>. India imports 86 items from China which includes electronics, computer hardware and telephonic equipment.<sup>22</sup> Other key import items from China by India were petroleum and related products, pearls, precious Gemstones, and coal, coke, and briquettes.<sup>23</sup> India's exports to China several things such as: iron ore, cotton, and other raw material-based commodities.<sup>24</sup>

Following Chinese aggression in Ladakh at (LAC) Indian government in June 2020 had banned 59 apps with Chinese including the popular Tik-Tok and UC Browser citing security reasons related to Data privacy; thereafter, 47 more Chinese apps were banned by India. In September of the same year, the government blocked 118 additional mobile applications, including the popular gaming app PUBG<sup>25</sup>, by terming them prejudicial to nation's sovereignty, integrity and

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid

<sup>14</sup>Sharma, M. (2019) "India's Approach to China's Belt and Road Initiative—Opportunities and Concerns", The Chinese Journal of Global Governance,, 5(2), 136-152. doi: doi.org/10.1163/23525207-12340041

<sup>15</sup> D. M. Baruah, (2018) "India's Answer to the Belt and Road: A Road Map for South Asia", August 21, 2018carnegieindia.org/2018/08/21/india-s-answer-to-belt-and-road-road-map-for-south-asia-pub-77071

<sup>16</sup> Hindustan Times Nov 30, 2020

<sup>17</sup> J.T.Jacob, Jabin. (2017). 'China's Belt and Road Initiative: Perspectives from India', China & World Economy, Vol. 25, No. 5, September-October, 78-100.

<sup>18</sup> J.T. Jacob, (2019) "China's Belt and Road Initiative and its implications for India", Feb 25, as retrieved from [www.in.boell.org/en/2019/02/25](http://www.in.boell.org/en/2019/02/25)

<sup>19</sup>Global Times Sep 07, 2021 "Trade between China, India continues to grow, despite cold bilateral ties",

<sup>20</sup>Will India-China relations take a different turn in the coming year? Dec 28, 2021www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/will-india-china-relations-take-a-different-turn-in-the-coming-year-121122800367\_1.html

<sup>21</sup> K.Singh,(2022) "Explained: India's bilateral trade with China in 2021", Indian Express January 26, 2022

<sup>22</sup> R.Nair & N.Pandey,(2020) "India 'critically dependent' on China in imports across 86 tariff lines - GoM report says", The Print, December 9, 2020

<sup>23</sup> N.Basu, (2022) "What conflict? India's imports from China soar to almost \$100 bn, led by smartphones, machinery" The Print Jan 24, 2022

<sup>24</sup> A.Krishnen,(2022) "India-China trade crossed \$125 bn in 2021", The Hindu, January 15, 2022

<sup>25</sup>As accessed from [pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1650669](http://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1650669)

defense.<sup>26</sup> The move was propagated as “digital strike” and was successfully used in easing domestic sentiments, and at the same time government attempted to send a message to Beijing.<sup>27</sup> The banned apps had high users in India and the move will have adverse economic impact on China but may prove beneficial for Indian techies to boom their business ventures.<sup>28</sup> Despite India’s ban on Chinese Apps Chinese investments in Indian startup ecosystem gained momentum in 2021<sup>29</sup>.

### 3.0 BORDER ISSUES BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA AND BI-LATERAL AGREEMENTS

Both the nations are exercising control over certain parts of territorial boundaries that are claimed by each other.<sup>30</sup> Due to non demarcation of the Line of Actual Control in the border areas, face-offs between troops of both the countries occur frequently<sup>31</sup>. The Sino –Indian boundary is one of the greatest disputed borders in the world is having three sections. The initial segment extending towards east of Bhutan, lies Arunachal Pradesh<sup>32</sup> is claimed by the Chinese as part of southern Tibetan territory. The next segment consists of area of 50-mile lying amid Nepal and Bhutan. Though petite, yet this border region is tactically important for India because it joins India’s eastern states with other countries. Fractions of this area are claimed by Bhutan, China and India. The third subdivision elongates towards northern Tibet Ladakh borders of the Indian Territory and Aksai Chin of the Chinese region<sup>33</sup>. Since the past several decades the issue is still unresolved.<sup>34</sup>.

India and China have signed several bilateral agreements as part of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) on the boundary with mutual agreements signed in 1993<sup>35</sup>, 1996<sup>36</sup>, 2005<sup>37</sup>, 2012<sup>38</sup> and 2013<sup>39</sup>. In the initial years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, both had affirmed that the border dispute won’t affect bilateral engagements between them.<sup>40</sup>

#### 3.1 Military Face-offs between India and China

##### 3.1.1 Galwan Valley<sup>41</sup> Violent Clash

The Galwan river valley, lies in the western region of the LAC and next to Aksai Chin, is a disputed area claimed by India

<sup>26</sup> “China criticizes India’s latest ban on 54 more Chinese mobile apps”, - Times of India Feb 17, 2022

<sup>27</sup> M.Kewalramani,(2021), “India Needs Strong Tech Policy & Regulations, Not Ban on Chinese Apps”, Jul 2,

2021www.thequint.com/voices/opinion/india-needs-strong-tech-policy-regulations-not-ban-on-chinese-apps#read-more

<sup>28</sup> As retrieved from www. mbaroi.in/blog/ban-on-chinese-apps-in-india/

<sup>29</sup> D.Ghosh,(2022) “Chinese investments into Indian start-ups hit a 3-year high in 2021” The Hindu Businessline Jan 2, 2022as accessed fromwww.thehindubusinessline.com/info-tech/ article64937879.ece

<sup>30</sup> “What is next in the China-India border conflict?”As accessed fromwww.dw.com/en/what-is-next-in-the-china-india-border-conflict/a-60586745

<sup>31</sup> “Retired Chinese military official moots ‘buffer zones’ to prevent Indo-China border conflict”, The Hindu Business line, Jun 15, 2021

<sup>32</sup> Indian state

<sup>33</sup> V.Mittal, (2022) “The Lesser-Known Border Dispute: China And India”Feb 21, 2022as accessed from

www.forbes.com/sites/vikrammittal/2022/02/21/the--lesser-known-border-dispute-china-and-india/?sh=79e30e5f192d

<sup>34</sup> I.Gilani, (2020) “India’s border dispute with neighbors”, as accessed from www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/indiass-border-dispute-with-neighbors/1859854

<sup>35</sup> Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the LAC

<sup>36</sup> Agreement on Confidence-Building Measures in the Military Field along the LAC

<sup>37</sup> Agreement between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of India on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the China-India Boundary Question

<sup>38</sup>Establishment of a Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs

<sup>39</sup>Border Defense Cooperation Agreement between India and China

<sup>40</sup> M.Bhosle, (2018) “Understanding Sino-Indian border issues: An analysis of incidents reported in the Indian media”, as accessed fromwww.orfonline.org/research/understanding-sino-indian-border-issues-an-analysis-of-incidents-reported-in-the-indian-media/

<sup>41</sup> In the eastern Ladakh region along the de-facto border known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC)

but under Chinese control.<sup>42</sup> Military officials of both the countries had decided to a "buffer zone" along the border area but still it is alleged that China is involved in "illegal infrastructure" including putting up tents and making bunkers and had moved equipment into the area; hence Indian troops also for monitoring Chinese activities formed a transitory walk-over overpass" above the Galwan River stream<sup>43</sup>. On 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 first deadly clash took place in the area since the past decade, in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed.<sup>44</sup> China has formally approved that five Chinese military officers and soldiers were killed during the clashes with the Indian Army but it is believed that the death toll is higher<sup>45</sup>. These military clashes have taken place despite protocol and the 1996 Agreement and have violated the same.

### 3.1.2 Doklam

Doklam (or Zhonglan or Donglong) is a disputed area between China and Bhutan and it lies on the Bhutan-China border, near India. The area carries a huge military advantage and if it goes under China, than the security of Bhutan as well as India will be at stake.<sup>46</sup> After coming to power in 2014, Prime Minister Modi adopted the Doval Doctrine<sup>47</sup> and "offensive defense" policy in the border area, with a view of enduring the advancement on Chinese territory and dwelling in the tactical commanding elevation; with the aim of compelling China to resolve the border issue in accordance with India's intent, so that India can budge its strategic focus towards the Indian Ocean.<sup>48</sup> Sino-Indian troops were affianced in a two-month confrontation in the summer of 2017 whilst the Chinese were attempting to construct a path in the area, the Indian troops, with the aid of Bhutan, were objecting the Chinese action.<sup>49</sup>

Later on, the army commanders of both the nations have mutually decided to take the initiative to hold talks for disengaging troops from key areas along their contested border in Ladakh for easing a 20-month military standoff<sup>50</sup>.

## 4.0 REGIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA-CHINA

### 4.1 SCO (*Shanghai Cooperation Organisation*)

The SCO is the global institution of which India and China are the members. It is a podium for mutual conversation between both of them to resolve the disputes. It has been crucial in harmonizing the relations between the two nations and in endowing with the opportunity to jointly respond to one another and for maintaining peace and stability in the Asian region. Participation in this organization is also significant due to Chinese perseverance on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) venture in the Eurasian area<sup>51</sup>; but tensed relations between both the countries obscures India's place in the SCO.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>42</sup>BBC News June 17, 2020 "Galwan Valley:China and India clash on freezing and inhospitable battlefield" as accessed from [www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-53076781](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-53076781)

<sup>43</sup>Economic Times Feb 03, 2022 "China's loss of soldiers during Galwan clash nine-times more than its official count, says new research", as accessed from [www.economictimes.indiatimes.com](http://www.economictimes.indiatimes.com) E-Paper

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>45</sup>A.Klan, Australian news The Kalxon

<sup>46</sup>Beena, M. BADRUL.(2019) "The Doklam Stalemate: The Tri-Junction between Bhutan, China and India." World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues, vol. 23, no. 1, Kapur Surya Foundation, 2019, pp. 60–69, as accessed from [www.jstor.org/stable/48531208](http://www.jstor.org/stable/48531208).

<sup>47</sup> Named after Ajit Doval (National security advisor), is marked by themes of Irrelevance of morality, Of extremism freed from calculation or calibration and Reliance on military.

<sup>48</sup>Zongyi Liu,(2020) "Boundary Standoff and China-India Relations: A Chinese Scholar's Perspective", China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies Vol. 06, No. 02, pp. 223-248 (2020)[doi.org/10.1142/S2377740020500141](https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740020500141)

<sup>49</sup>The Hindu,(E-Paper) Jan 27,2018 J.Joseph, "What is the Doklam issue all about?"

<sup>50</sup>A.Pasricha,(2022) "India, China Hold Talks on Border Disengagement", Jan 12,2022[www.voanews.com](http://www.voanews.com)

<sup>51</sup>D. Vij, J. Teckchandani,(2021) "India and China at SCO: Emerging competition and cooperation", as retrieved from [www.wionews.com/opinions-blogs/india-and-china-at-sco-emerging-competition-and-cooperation-422433](http://www.wionews.com/opinions-blogs/india-and-china-at-sco-emerging-competition-and-cooperation-422433)

Chinese connoisseur has cautioned India not to be "poison" for collaboration under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as India had tried to use SCO, as a platform on the Afghan issue.<sup>53</sup> Persistent boundary arguments, clashes and violent geostrategic competition between both are likely to hinder any collaboration.<sup>54</sup>

The SCO platform may prove to be a game changer in ending the ongoing drift but the present incidents are pulling the two back from the edge of compromise and dragging them towards confrontation. China's close proximity with Russia and Pakistan is making India's role marginalized putting it odd one out in the SCO.<sup>55</sup> Still, India can use SCO as a platform for questioning the intention behind China's extraordinary close ties to Pakistan.<sup>56</sup>

#### 4.2. ASEAN-(The Association of Southeast Asian Nations)

India's connection with ASEAN is strength of its foreign policy and the base of its Act East Policy. India's comprehensive correlation with ASEAN is a result of the major changes in the world's political and economic state of affairs<sup>57</sup> and at the same time, there is the importance of the "China factor" in India's engagement with ASEAN<sup>58</sup>. South Asia is fetching the aggressive arenas between India and China. Centrally sited geographical position of India, its population, and armed strength measure up to other nations in the region, has made India a prominent power in the region. Over the past decade, China's rapport with small countries in South Asia is intimidating India's position in the region.<sup>59</sup> Some of the ASEAN countries<sup>60</sup> are having territorial disputes with China over South China Sea<sup>61</sup>. This gives India a unique opportunity for fielding itself and balancing its strength with China over the issue.<sup>62</sup> India's rendezvous with South East Asia is the core desire to upbeat China by averting its emergence as Sino-centric regional order. In the late 1990's, ASEAN expanded its ambit by including new states<sup>63</sup> this action brought the Sino-Indian relationship into the added central spot as ASEAN came to the edge with both India and China. India's ASEAN dedication reveals its aspiration to craft and defends against the surfacing of a Sino-centric regional order.<sup>64</sup> Southeast Asia has proven as congregation position of Chinese and Indian sway in both the cultural and political sphere. Both Beijing and New Delhi have made noteworthy attempts in coagulating

<sup>52</sup>P.Stobdan,(2020) "China-India Tensions Put New Delhi at the Margins of the SCO", [thediplomat.com/2020/09/china-india-tensions-put-new-delhi-at-the-margins-of-the-sco/](https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/china-india-tensions-put-new-delhi-at-the-margins-of-the-sco/)

<sup>53</sup>Zhang Hui and Liu Xin(2021) "India warned not to be 'poison' for SCO cooperation, as it seeks influence on Afghan issue", Global TimesSep 17, 2021

<sup>54</sup> D.Grossman, (2017) "China Will Regret India's Entry Into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization", The RAND Blog as accessed from [www.rand.org/blog/2017/07/china-will-regret-indias-entry-into-the-shanghai-cooperation.html](https://www.rand.org/blog/2017/07/china-will-regret-indias-entry-into-the-shanghai-cooperation.html)

<sup>55</sup> P.Stobdan, (2020) "China-India Tensions Put New Delhi at the Margins of the SCO", [thediplomat.com/2020/09/china-india-tensions-put-new-delhi-at-the-margins-of-the-sco/](https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/china-india-tensions-put-new-delhi-at-the-margins-of-the-sco/)

<sup>56</sup>D.Grossman, (2018) "China Will Regret India's Entry Into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization", The Rand Blog July 24, 2017

<sup>57</sup>As accessed from [mea.gov.in/aseanindia/20-years.html](https://mea.gov.in/aseanindia/20-years.html) August 2018

<sup>58</sup>Z.HONG, (2007). "India and China: Rivals or Partners in Southeast Asia?" *Contemporary Southeast Asia*,29(1), 121–142. As accessed from [www.jstor.org/stable/25798817](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25798817)

<sup>59</sup> Le Thi Hang Ng and Nguyen Le Thy Thuong (2021), "India–China Competition in South Asia Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Administration", *The Journal of Indian and Asian Studies* Vol. 02, No. 01, 2150001 (2021)doi.org/10.1142/S2717541321500017

<sup>60</sup> Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei

<sup>61</sup> BBC News July 12, 2016, "Why is the South China Sea contentious?" [www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13748349](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13748349)

<sup>62</sup> K.Banerjee,(2018) "Beyond Republic Day show, ASEAN can help India take on China in Southeast Asia" *India Today* Jan. 24, 2018

<sup>63</sup> Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam

<sup>64</sup> C.Bajpae,(2018) "The China factor in India's commitment to ASEAN" Jan 24, 2018 The Interpreter [www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/china-factor-india-s-commitment-asean](https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/china-factor-india-s-commitment-asean)

arrangements with the ASEAN nations and are amid the vigorous allies of the regional financial planning.<sup>65</sup>

Regardless of the best intentions of an Act East Policy, India's reputation and reflection in Southeast Asia have endured and ASEAN has displayed an increasingly accommodative approach towards China<sup>66</sup>; Since China has been more successful than India in strengthening its political and economic ties with Southeast Asian nations.<sup>67</sup>

#### 4.3 Brics

It is an association of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa the emerging economies in international politics. It has given a direction for non-confrontational cooperative strategic partnership that can change the blueprint of bilateral, regional, multilateral as well as global relationship.<sup>68</sup> However, it was apprehended that due to shimmering border disputes between China and India smooth functioning of the group will not be possible.<sup>69</sup> The BRICS summit of September 2017 held in China (Xiamen) was attended by Indian Prime minister Modi. Even the Doklam border standoff was resolved merely couple and half months, prior to BRICS summit. A prospective ray of hope to unfasten the standoff exists with the upcoming 14th BRICS summit in 2022 which will be hosted by China but the officials feel it will be used like a lever to be used.<sup>70</sup>

### 5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

India - China relationship is a conundrum which keeps on changing equations between both the nations at times they appear to be friendly and at times both appear to be at loggerheads. Both have solid trade bases and interdependence relating to trade policy is inevitable. When it comes to the political arena the border disputes hinder the growth of proximity between the two.

The military stand-off of Galwan and Doklam reflects the increasing political tension, which has strained relations between both countries.

Since the countries are either members of common regional corporations or else associated with the same regional corporations both must realize that both have geographically favorable positions and both have the potential of raising their economies hence instead of confronting each other they must try to resolve their border disputes amicably. China must not look at India as a competitor but must establish cordial relationships by abiding by the peace keeping agreements rather than breaking the trust and playing blame games. BRIC summits can play a vital role in bringing both the nations together but Indian leaders are of the opinion that India cannot turn a blind eye or deaf ear toward Chinese border intrusions hence the issue is casting a grey shadow on the possibility of India's presence in upcoming BRIC Summit.

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<sup>65</sup>Zhang Li,(2021) “*China-India RelationsStrategic Engagement and Challenges*”,Asie Vissions 3 4 IFRI centre for Asian Studies

<sup>66</sup> S.Baru,(2021) “*What's going wrong with India's Act East policy?*” Indian Express May 26, 2021

<sup>67</sup> Astarita, Claudia. (2011). “*The China-India rivalry in Eas and Asean-Led For a*” 87-110.

<sup>68</sup> D.Kochar, (2014)“*BRICS Summit and India-China Relations*”, Jul, 2014 as accessed from [www.ipcs.org/comm\\_select.php?articleNo=4571](http://www.ipcs.org/comm_select.php?articleNo=4571)

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